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### Liquor Men and the Plebiscite.

On Thursday last a delegation of the License Holders' Protection Association of Ontario, with representatives of the liquor interests in some other provinces of the Dominion, waited on Mr. Laurier and other ministers of the Crown in the interests of anti-prohibition. The lines laid down for the representations of the delegation are given as follows:

(1.) That the deputation be instructed to urge upon the Government, that inasmuch as the plebiscite vote is a Dominion measure, that the list to be used in placing that vote before the people of the Dominion should be the Dominion voters' list as it is at present, with the repeating vote struck out. (2.) That an absolute majority of all the electors of the entire Dominion and Territories be required before the Government take any steps to introduce a measure in the direction of prohibition. (3.) That when submitting the question to the people the Government also submit the following questions: Are you in favor of direct taxation, in order to make up the deficit, which will be caused if a prohibition law is brought into effect. (4.) That compensation be granted to those who will be effected by the introduction of prohibition.

Mr. Haversam, who was spokesman for the deputation, of course made prominent the question of revenue. The Dominion Government, he said, derived eight millions from liquor and the several provinces two millions more, and as the government held that the tariff was already too high, the deficiency must be made up by direct taxation. In reply Mr. Laurier intimated that as the friends of prohibition believed that the time was ripe such a measure, the taking of a plebiscite on the question had been made a plank in the Liberal platform. As to the request of the delegation respecting a voters' list he could give no definite answer, but said that what was asked was open to the objection of making a special law for a special case. Mr. Laurier agreed that the adoption of prohibition would involve direct taxation. This, he said, was the only resource of the government for making up the deficit that prohibition would create. This fact the people should apprehend, and it would be borne in mind by the government in framing the bill. As to what should be the conclusive vote on the question, the Premier was not prepared to say. Such a measure, to be effective, must be staunchly supported. The whole subject was greatly beset with difficulties. The government, however, was prepared to obey the will of the people, but the popular mandate to create the law must be unmistakable. The question of compensation Mr. Laurier declined to discuss. It is stated that the Plebiscite bill will be introduced in the Senate by Sir Oliver Mowatt on Tuesday of the present week.

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### The Quebec Elections.

The Provincial election in Quebec on Tuesday of last week resulted in the overthrow of Mr. Flynn's Government and a very sweeping victory for the Liberal party, led by Mr. Marchand. As in the case of Nova Scotia, the result was a surprise for both parties in the contest, for, though Mr. Marchand and his party claimed to be confident of victory, they had no expectation of being able to elect two-thirds

or more of the new House. The returns as given are: Liberals 50, Conservatives 22, with the election in one constituency yet to be held. Premier Flynn, himself, came within nine votes of being defeated in Gaspé. In the general elections five years ago the Conservatives had nearly as large a majority as the Liberals now have, and though the Government had lost several seats in the bye-elections, Mr. Flynn was still supported in the House by a majority of some twenty votes. Some of the causes of the overturns are easily apprehended. The sentiment of the province is now generally with Mr. Laurier and the fact that the latter is now the leader of a strong government at Ottawa, tells powerfully in favor of his friend, Mr. Marchand, in Quebec. How much influence the ecclesiastical leaders exercised in the contest is not very clear. There is no doubt that the bishops desired the defeat of Mr. Marchand and his party though they appear prudently to have refrained from employing any extreme measures to secure that end. The Montreal Witness says that the great question in the mind of the people was "whether they were going to submit to clerical absolutism on the school question and have their votes dictated to them on that behalf," and adds: "There is no doubt that the revolution signalized by the elections of June, 1896, and of May, 1897, has been brought to a head by the domineering course of a group of narrow-minded bishops at the behest of a very unwise one at St. Boniface. The emancipation of the people of this province from clerical thralldom is the central and great fact of this decade of its history. It is a step to which the church will have to adapt itself as it may, for it will never be taken back." In the same connection, the Montreal Star says: "Yesterday's victory must be regarded as the finally final settlement of the School Question. Mr. Flynn was most careful not to drag that or any other Federal issues into the campaign, but the Liberals courted rather than shunned the popular judgment on the question." Mr. Marchand, who will lead the new government in Quebec, is a man whose personal character commands universal respect. If he prove strong enough to resist the evil influences to which he will be subject from the worse elements in his party and choose for his lieutenants good and able men, he may succeed in giving his province an excellent government.

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The Duke of Fife It may be remembered that when Mr. Cecil Rhodes was before the Parliamentary Committee and the Transvaal Raid, pointed to enquire into South African affairs connected with the Transvaal raid, he declined to say whether or not the directors of the South Africa Company residing in England were—as Mr. Rhodes confessed himself to have been—privy to the plans which resulted in Jameson's ill-fated expedition. It seems quite reasonable to suppose that if Mr. Rhodes could have said truthfully that these plans were unknown to the directors—among whom was the Duke of Fife, son-in-law to the Prince of Wales—he would have done so, and his declining to do so could not but leave an unfavorable impression upon the public mind respecting the relation of the said directors to the troubles in South Africa. At a sitting of the Committee held last week, the Duke of Fife was questioned as to his knowledge of the Jameson raid. He quite positively declared that he had no prior knowledge of it whatever, nor any suspicion that the Chartered Company's troops might be used in connection with the troubles at Johannesburg or elsewhere in the Transvaal, nor had he any suspicion that any interference with the affairs of the Transvaal was contemplated by any

one connected with the Company. The Duke further said that he had been deceived by Mr. Rhodes in the matter, and that he deeply deplored the action of those connected with the Company who had mixed themselves up in the miserable business. Whether the other directors were as ignorant as the Duke of Fife of what was being done remains to be seen.

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### Unhappy Greece.

European despatches of a week ago were such as to lead to the belief that the Greco-Turkish war was virtually at an end. The Greek government, it was said, had consented to recall its troops from Crete, and had placed the interests of the country entirely in the hands of the Powers, in order that they might bring about a settlement with Turkey. But it would appear that the Powers have found the Sultan less ready than they had supposed to consent to terms of peace on such conditions as would be acceptable to them and not too oppressive upon Greece. At all events the Turkish military authorities do not seem to have slackened their hands. There has been no more than a brief lull in hostilities, and there are reports that preparation is being made by the Porte for operations on a still larger scale. At present writing the Turkish general, Edhem Pasha, is reported to be concentrating his forces against Domokos, a strong position occupied by the Greek army after its defeat at Pharsalos. It is, however, doubtful whether the Greeks will make a stand here or will retreat to Thermopylae. Whether the war end here or proceed farther, the result cannot but be profoundly humiliating to Greece. She has lost steadily. She has been over-matched by the Turks, not only in number, but in generalship and discipline. With troops for the most part wholly new to active service, with a sad lack of generalship and with no leader of commanding ability anywhere, it was the height of folly for Greece to enter upon a war with so powerful a foe under such conditions.

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—In the Sunday School lesson in the International series for next Sunday we have an indirect lesson as to the place and value of concession and compromise in the church. The whole teaching and spirit of the New Testament, where matters of essential truth and positive duty are concerned, we need not say, forbids concessions. But there is an area, lying within the great circle of truth and loyalty to Christ, in which concession to the opinions, prejudices and weaknesses of others becomes permissible and more or less a Christian duty. The rule that the Gentile Christians should abstain from the eating of blood and things strangled was a concession, and a wise concession, of Christian liberty to Jewish feeling and custom. Paul's opinion evidently was, that for an intelligent Christian to eat meat that had been offered in an idol's temple was not in itself a sin, yet he commended those who, for the sake of weaker brethren, forbore to use all their liberty in this and in other matters. A great deal of trouble has arisen and is perpetually arising in Christian communities because men fail to recognize the value and the duty of concession. Many a church is vexed and troubled by some man, or body of men, who magnify matters of comparatively indifferent concern into a principle of vital significance, and make its acceptance, as such, a condition of their continued fellowship with the church. It would appear that in some people the boundary between self-will and conscience is so badly defined that they are continually mistaking the one for the other. And some are so afraid of sacrificing their reputation for firmness that they refuse to make sufficient concession to enable them to live in fellowship with their brethren.